Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor

2511. DR. K. KASTURIRANGAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India plans to join the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor Project; and

(b) if so, the nature of our participation including the financial implications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) At present India is not a part of ITER project. However, Government of India has recently decided to participate in the ITER project as a full partner. Letters expressing our interest have been sent to all ITER partners. The financial implication on our part is presently estimated at Rs. 2500 crore over a period of ten years which will be in the form of in kind contribution such as equipment and services of personnel.

Augmentation of harnessing atomic energy

2512. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether electric power derived from atomic power stations, besides Hydel Power, provides cost effective and quality source of electricity as compared to thermal power;

(b) whether industrialized countries *viz.*, the USA, UK and other in EU and some in the pacific region are harnessing Atomic Energy to meet their power demands more than on thermal power;

(c) the present status of India in this regard vis-a-vis these countries;

(d) whether the Government are contemplating augmentation of harnessing Atomic Energy;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) if not, principle constraints therefor; and

(g) the details of steps contemplated to overcome them?